



Hunter Environment Lobby Inc.

PO Box 188
East Maitland NSW 2323

Elle Donelley
Major Project Assessments
Department of Planning and Infrastructure
GPO Box 31
Sydney NSW 2000

Friday 29 November 2013

Objection to Warkworth Modification 6 (DA-300-9-2002-i)

Dear Ms Donelley

Hunter Environment Lobby Inc. (HEL) is a regional community-based environmental organization that has been active for more than fifteen years on the issues of environmental degradation, species and habitat loss, and climate change.

HEL strongly objects to the proposal to expand the current Warkworth open cut mine project into the Saddle Ridge area that was protected under a Deed Of Agreement signed in 2003 as a 'non disturbance area.'

The Warkworth Mine was approved in 2003 for a period of 18 years. This means that the mine has a further 8 years of extraction available based on the predictions made in the environmental assessment that informed the Department of Planning approval process.

No rigorous economic analysis has been provided to justify the claims that a significant number of jobs will be lost under the current approval conditions over the next 8 years.

There is no available information that demonstrates to what degree the initial predictions have been proven to be incorrect. This proposal is a clear indication that approval for large mining projects over a long time scale is inappropriate.

HEL maintains that if the economic value of the coal resource is so great, an underground project would have less impact on the surrounding natural environment and the community in general.

HEL believes that this modification should not be approved and that the proponent be required to lodge an application for an underground project to provide secure mining jobs into the future.

The cumulative impact on air quality from the current open cut mining operations cannot be adequately regulated in extreme weather events. The increased noise impacts of open cut mining operations on local community residents adds to the cumulative impact on health and amenity.

The area of endangered ecological community protected in the non disturbance area is an offset for removal of these vegetation types and habitat approved in the 2003 approval process. The proposal to destroy another 16ha in an extension of the open cut will have a double impact on biodiversity values in an area with a record of significant loss.

HEL believes that the information supplied in the proposal document is inadequate for making an informed decision on the merits of the modification.

Many of the impacts would also be resolved by an underground project.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Jan Davis', written in dark ink.

Jan Davis
President